GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1664
ANSWERED ON:09.03.2007
AVAILABILITY OF WATER
Ramadass Prof. M

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the average availability of water is likely to fall below the water stress level in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether the per capita storage of water in the country is way below the storage achieved in many of the countries;

(d) if so, the manner in which the Government proposes to make safe drinking water available and accessible in rural areas; and

(e) the changes proposed in delivery mechanism of the different schemes?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU)

(a) & (b) The average annual water availability of the country has been assessed as 1869 BCM. The average annual water availability may be considered to remain unchanged. The availability of water for the country as a whole is considered adequate to meet the present level of demand of water for diverse purposes.

(c) The per capita storage capacity of water in India is about 207 cubic metre(m3) which is below the per capita storage capacity of water in many other countries. State Governments take steps to conserve, plan and implement major, medium & minor schemes for utilization of water resources. Accordingly storage capacity of about 213 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) has been created so far. As per present assessment, the total estimated storage capacity of the various projects under construction is about 76 BCM and that for the projects under formulation is about 108 BCM.

(d) and (e) As far as drinking water is concerned, drinking water is one of the six components of Bharat Nirman which has been conceived as a plan to be implemented in four years from 2005-06 to 2008-09 for building rural infrastructure. Under Bharat Nirman it is proposed to cover all the uncovered habitations with safe sources of drinking water as well as to address slipped back and quality affected habitations by 2008-09.

Government of India is providing central assistance to the State Governments through various schemes/programmes such as Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP), Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM) Programme; National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to agriculture etc. The Government of India also encourage rainwater harvesting and recharge to groundwater for conservation of water. Water conservation is one of the topmost priority areas under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.